

## THE KINGDOM IN TABLEAU

– NOVEMBER 24. – MARK 9:2-13. –

**"A voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son; hear ye Him. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone."  
– Luke 9:35.**

OUR STUDIES continue to appertain to Messiah's Kingdom of glory. Today's lesson tells of a tableau illustration given to His disciples respecting it. The lesson deeply impressed the three Apostles who witnessed the vision, namely, Peter, James and John. St. Peter referred to it afterward in his Epistle (2 Pet. 1:16-19), saying, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of His Majesty...when we were with Him in the holy mount."

Jesus prepared His disciples for the transfiguration vision, saying, "There be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death until they see God's Royal Majesty having come with power." The occasion will be remembered. Jesus had foretold His death, quite contrary to the previous expectations of the Apostles, and now He sought to draw their minds gradually to a realization that His death would not mean a repudiation of the promise of the Kingdom and its glory but a fulfilment of their expectations on a higher plane. Jesus would formally offer Himself to Israel as King riding upon the ass five days before His crucifixion; He would be despised and rejected and crucified; but His kingly office and work would thereby only be confirmed. His authority to be King of the earth, His authority to release mankind from the power of sin and death, His authority to uplift humanity and to bring the earth in general to Paradise conditions, would all be founded upon His sacrificial death at Calvary.

All this was presented to the three chosen disciples six days later. Jesus took them to the mountain-top and was transfigured before them. His flesh and His garments shone and glistened white, after the manner of angels, the vision thus representing the Lord after having experienced His resurrection change from earthly to heavenly conditions. Then with Him "talked two men," says St. Luke, "who appeared in glory" – radiant, but less so than Jesus.

In some manner they recognized these two men of the vision as Moses and Elijah. They heard these discourse with Jesus respecting His decease, "which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem," says St. Luke. How long the vision lasted we are not told, but St. Peter, thinking that he should make some comment on the situation, and not knowing what to say, suggested the building of three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, one for Elijah. He evidently thought that the Master would be rejoiced at such blessed fellowship, and he was willing to do anything for His aid.

### **"THIS IS MY BELOVED SON"**

Then came a voice from the overshadowing cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him!" And suddenly the vision vanished, and they saw only Jesus with them, and He no longer with radiant appearance. What could it all mean? It may be that several good lessons came out of this: (1) During the six days following the announcement of the Master's coming suffering, ignominy and death, we may assume that the Apostles were sad-hearted, bewildered. In this condition it would be a great refreshment, and be strengthening to their faith to witness this vision which testified of Jesus they knew not what, but which showed them that the death He had foretold was a certainty and known of God and of Divine approval.

(2) The voice from the cloud would be a fresh encouragement to their faith. They had believed that Jesus was all that He claimed to be – the Son of the Highest. They had believed that He was not an ordinary member of the human family, born in sin, but that He had

been particularly and specially born from above by Divine power. They had believed His own testimony that He proceeded forth and came from God and that He would return to the Father, but now their faith was corroborated; God Himself had testified in this miraculous manner that Jesus was His Son, His Well-Beloved, His Only One.

### **"TELL NO MAN THE VISION"**

As the Apostles were coming down the mountainside with Jesus, wondering about the meaning of the vision they had seen, Jesus said to them, "See that ye tell no man the vision until after the Son of Man is risen from the dead." (Matt. 17:9.) So "they kept the saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the Lord meant by the rising again from the dead." Thus, little by little, the Great Teacher impressed upon His true disciples great truths which they could not otherwise have learned, seeing that they had not yet been begotten of the Holy Spirit; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, the Pentecost blessing had not yet come, because Jesus had not yet suffered nor risen from the dead, nor ascended into the presence of God to make Sin-Atonement on their behalf.

The fact that Moses and Elijah appeared as real to the Apostles as though they were in life does not contradict the words of Jesus that what they saw was a vision. We are to remember the many visions given later on to one of these Apostles, St. John, recorded in the Book of Revelation. In those visions St. John saw angels and men, horsemen, beasts, crowns, etc., and heard voices and singing and talking, etc., just as in this vision.

### **THE MEANING OF THE VISION**

We have St. Peter's words (2 Pet. 1:16) in corroboration of the text here, that what they saw on the mountain represented the Royal Majesty of Messiah – the Kingdom of Messiah. Moses represented the faithful of Natural Israel, the "House of Servants"; "Moses as a servant, was faithful over all his House." Elijah represented The Christ

in the flesh, the House of Sons, which has been in process of development throughout this Gospel [R5121 : page 330] Age. All of the consecrated, spirit-begotten people of God, during this Age, are represented by Elijah, who, God promised, should come before Messiah would set up His Kingdom. In other words, the Elijah class is composed of Jesus and all of His footstep followers throughout this Gospel Age – in their earthly or fleshly condition, spirit-begotten, but not yet spirit-born.

This Elijah company as a whole must be developed and must do a work in the world before the real Kingdom of Messiah can be established. The glorification of Jesus, following His death and resurrection, was due, but as the glorified One He stood between the Moses class, called previously, and the Elijah class, which had just begun to be called to be His joint-heirs in the Kingdom. He was thus in their midst, and the crucifixion at Jerusalem was about to fulfil all the conditions necessary to the bringing about of the Messianic reign.

But the glorification of Jesus was not the only thing necessary; the entire Church, the Body, must suffer with Him and be completed and then be joined with Him beyond the veil before the Kingdom glory can be fully established. This work of calling and preparing an Elijah class has been in progress for more than eighteen centuries and we believe is now nearly completed. As John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus in the flesh, so this greater Elijah, the Church in the flesh, is the Forerunner of the great Messiah on the spirit plane. We must suffer with Him if we would share in His resurrection and share in His glory. This was the lesson of the transfiguration vision.

The disciples wondered and queried, saying, "Why do the Pharisees and Scribes tell us," according to the Scriptures, "that Elijah must first come." Jesus answered that, in a sense, to those who could receive it, John the Baptist had thus come, and had introduced Jesus as the Messiah, and that John the Baptist had in a sense fulfilled this prophecy when He introduced the Redeemer-King.

St. Peter's words, already referred to, fully satisfy us that the transfiguration scene was a vision of the coming glory of Christ – "We were eye-witnesses of His Majesty, that the promised Kingdom will eventually come. The vision on the mount confirms this to us. However, the prophecies of old, which foretold Messiah's coming and reign, are still more authentic, "more sure," they cannot fail; the Kingdom merely awaits the sufferings of those who will be the members of the Body of Christ. Then, at the Second Coming of Jesus, these will be blessed and glorified, and the class represented by Moses will also be blessed and used as instruments of the Kingdom. Thus in the vision the entire Kingdom was represented: first of all, by Jesus Himself, second by Elijah, who represented the Church class, and third by Moses, who represented the faithful on the earthly plane, through whom the Heavenly blessings will pour out upon humanity. **page 330**

O, Master, it is good to be  
Entranced, enrapt, alone with Thee,  
Till we, too, changed from grace to grace,  
Gaze on Thine own transfigured face.

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